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HOME COURSE IN MENTAL SCIENCE.

BY HELEN WILMANS.

LESSON SIXTEEN.

"THE STONE THAT THE BUILDERS REJECTED."

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LESSON XVI.

In looking back over the previous lessons I find that I have not made the subject of desire so prominent as I wish to, and have concluded to say more about it. It is a subject of vast importance. All further advancement in growth depends upon a thorough understanding of it. Therefore I mean to make it plain even though I am accused of needless repetition. This lesson will be in a measure a recapitulation of the whole subject.

How does it happen that man is so in the dark concerning himself?

It is because he was not created a perfect creature. It is because his individual existence is of comparatively short duration. It is because he is a growing creature, and has not even yet attained the full stature of the intelligent man.

Man has created himself little by little all through a thousand ages.

Though latent in the one Life forever, yet there was a time when two or three tiny points of recognition came together, through the Law of Attraction, and formed the beginning of his personality. These points of intelligence being fused into one, thus became a magnet of greater power than the single magnets around them, and as a center of attraction had more power to draw others to themselves; and thus personal growth commenced.

And the tiny creature thus begun, kept on growing all the time, both internally and externally. The more it recognized of the quality of the power of the Law the more power it put forth.

The basis of all growth is desire. Desire is the unacknowledged factor in the evolution of man. Desire is the "corner stone which the builders have rejected;" and it is desire that shall prove the chief prop in the foundation of the temple "not built with hands"—the temple of universal man.

The Law of Life has only one mode of expression, only one voice, and that is the voice of desire. The very first faint monition of life was recognition of desire. It was the feeling of some want. This was the

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beginning of individual growth. It was, as it were, the projection of a little voice that cried "more, more."

And now I weaken in view of the impossibility of showing the student the mighty power of this tiny voice. Oh, this voice! What a builder it has proved! Mightier than the magician's wand, even in its first, faint, almost inaudible cry! A mere speck, invisible through the most powerful microscope, an almost infinitesimal drop of (so-called) protoplasm, yet so much incarnate desire, and crying for food—crying for a more enlarged life, a wider comprehension of Life, or Love. And, only think of it, the little voice reaching upward and expanding outward, and the very universe stopping to listen and bending to fill the tiny mouth; stooping in her beneficent motherhood to gratify this baby demand.

The very first little life that sent out its cry for "more, more," became a standing demand upon the universal motherhood of nature, and the supply has always proved equal to the demand. And all through the period of our unconscious growth the babies have never once lost faith in the mother. The spirits within them never once thought of curtail-

ing their demands or of crucifying their desires. To crush their desires was to crush the Law of their lives. They only recognized their desires, and this was recognizing the Law; and to recognize the Law is to make it manifest. Now the more of the Law these creatures recognized, the greater and stronger they grew.

I take it for granted that desire is individualized Law. In other words the Law manifests in individual desires. These desires being clothed upon by individual thought, or recognition, become our individualities.

So the desire in a man is the fountain-head of life in the man. Life has no other way of speaking through individual recognition but by desire.

Now, all through the period of our unconscious growth we never dreamed of questioning our desires. We obeyed them. We yielded them a blind and unquestioning obedience. And what was the result? Why this—that desire was drawn forth to organization until the tiny drop of protoplasm had built itself a digestive system and a most complex and beautiful form, adapted to every possible emergency. Speak-

ing from a mechanical point of view, desire, which corresponds to steam, had built itself a beautiful engine, and even an engineer (in the brain) that was to direct the engine. But the engineer at first did not know his duty, and for thousands of years he has been trying to learn it. It has taken him all this time to get acquainted with his engine and the power that propels it.

As it is man's highest privilege to make mistakes, since it is the only way he has of learning, his first mistake was to imagine that his propelling power, the steam in his boiler, was a dangerous foe, and to begin to repress it.

"I must crucify desire!" was the first exclamation he ever made upon becoming conscious of its presence. "Desire is the devil!" shouted the clergy for a thousand years; and numberless monasteries were built in whose seclusion it was easy to crucify desire; easy to dam up the energizing spirit of life in the man and prevent it from flowing forth. It is a matter of history how even kings and princes submitted voluntarily to whipping on the bare back as a penalty for having entertained desire. Desire was the great foe of the race. I have no doubt but the devil in

Eden who tempted Eve was desire. Now put it this way and let us see how that fable stands. In one of my first lessons I think I made it plain that the garden of Eden was man's condition of unconscious growth. It was that early condition in which he conformed to the Law of his Being (his desire) unquestioningly. There was never a conscientious scruple to trouble him in the gratification of his wants. His life, though on the animal or unreasoning plane, was whole in itself. No side feeling ever pulled him from the straight path of his leading inclination. He devoured other animals without compunction. He never had anything to regret. Consequently he was in a condition of ease, or repose. This was the animal Eden. In this Eden man did not work for his living, but subsisted on what came to his hand. But Eve—who is the intuitional part of man—partook of the tree of knowledge in the midst of the garden and her eyes were opened so that she knew truth from error.

Man represents the intellect and woman the intuition of the race. With the awakening of intuition came a dawning knowledge of justice. For intuition is the love fountain in the human being, and it is rightly called female.

The very first faint intimation of justice in the race broke up its animalized conditions, called a halt in the progress of that old first law in which might makes right, and began a sort of unorganized, primitive defence for the entire body of the people. The moral aspect was born, and its birth destroyed the first Eden. Men began to labor for their bread. Their growing brains projected ever new questions for solution, and these questions were answered by the feeble light of such intelligence as they had, and false, or negative, beliefs were the result.

In the old Eden only the brute instinct was recognized, and this brute instinct was devoid of conscience. But the mother love for the child, and farther on the mother sympathy for other mothers interposed a check. Eve has always molded Adam. Her tenderer nature has always stood at the portals of his more robust intelligence, and when he opened to her, lo! she had the apple in her hand. She had eaten first of the tree of knowledge of truth and error, and she bade him eat of it too. He did so, and the primitive Eden of animal content shut on both of them forever. They had started out on a life-long voyage in pursuit of truth.

Desire is the unacknowledged factor in personal growth. But is not desire a selfish thing? And is this not a good reason for crucifying it?

I answer, desire certainly appears to be a selfish thing. As man is a growing creature his first desire is expressed in an instinct for more life. He cries for more life all the time, and as his intelligence has not ripened up to a point where a perception of justice is possible to him, he destroys ruthlessly the other lives that come in his way so that he may live. His ignorant but powerful recognition of the Law of Life within him is expressed in uncompromising selfishness.

Now selfishness, even in its most marked form, is nothing but individualism expressed on an animal, or undeveloped, plane. The animal, or animal man, who expresses selfishness is still expressing the Law by the best light he has; for every manifestation of life is an expression of the Law, no matter how selfishly it is expressed.

The reason that all creatures do not manifest more of the Law in their personalities is because they are not able to recognize more. It is the personal intelligence that is at fault and not the pure, bright, unblemished spirit of the Law within each creature.

Now, individualism—and note this statement carefully—is the one potent fact standing head and shoulders above every other fact, except that great and all inclusive truth that the Law *is*. For the Law might as well not exist as not to be able to express itself; and it is expressed through individualism. The spoken word of the Law puts its own interpretation upon itself, and this interpretation, no matter how incorrect it may be, is the personal creature; the external creature. At present the spoken word is not so much a true conception of the Law as a misconception of it, just as if a powerful thought had been uttered, and you had caught the words, but were quite unable to comprehend the meaning of them. So every living creature, no matter how mean and ignoble it may appear, is the spoken word of the Law; and each of these spoken words is hastening on to a better recognition of its own meaning. By slow degrees the spoken words are discovering that the Law infusing them is Love, and only Love. And as this knowledge of themselves grows within their own intelligences their selfish methods of indulgence change, and conform more and more to the Law, which is pure justice, and from which comes the knowledge of universal brotherhood.

And yet it is true that the Law as expressed within them is desire—every bit desire. And this desire always clamors for itself, for its own interests. Were this not so, individuality would be an impossible thing, and the word of Life might as well have remained unspoken.

What is it that the spirit of man clamors for? It is in answering this question that we will discover how desire may be the breath of the divine spirit of all good in man, and not the wicked thing we have always believed it to be. Desire as manifesting in individuality is simply an ever increasing demand for more and more happiness. Happiness is the right of every person. It is our one aim and object, and our only pursuit; and there is not a solitary exception to the rule in the world, or in the universe. The frailest and faintest speck of life has started in the never-ending pursuit of happiness. It is infused by a desire that is of the Law; or rather, it is a part of the Law struggling toward a comprehension of itself.

The Law is Love. It is the living principle of attraction in all things that seeks continually to draw atoms into closer relation to each other. Love, when it becomes a conscious thing to the understanding of

the individual, shapes itself in desire, or desires. With every step in evolution, from lower to higher, these desires become more numerous, more complex and varied; and they also become stronger. They are felt to be the moving spirit of every action, as indeed they ought to be, for they are nothing less than the voice of the one eternal Life Principle that men call "God."

There is only one attracting power, and it is the Law of all substance. It is the same in essence in the horse-shoe magnet and in the mother's yearning for her child. It is this same thing that brings lovers together in marriage, and partners in business. It is the hidden motor to every movement that ever was made—unintelligent movements no less than intelligent ones. It is this that draws the moisture out of the earth on which the tree feeds, and the substance out of the sun's rays with which it colors itself in beauty.

The Law of Attraction, which is the Love Principle, or Law of Life, accounts for all things, and is responsible for all things. It is perfect, and therefore unchangeable. It is the same in man, and in the flowers and beasts, and it has but one voice—the voice of desire. And this voice

speaks for just one thing; it speaks for happiness. The methods by which men pursue happiness may be just or unjust. The desire, which is the Law in man, has nothing to do with his methods. The desire exists, and this is all. The desire is the man's moving impulse. It is his true, pure, unsinning self. The methods by which he attempts to actualize his desire have in the main proven to be mistakes.

But the greatest mistake man has ever made is to attribute his mistakes to the desire within him, when nothing was wrong but his limited intelligence.

And it is because he has made this vital mistake that he has spent ages in crucifying his desires instead of cultivating his intelligence concerning their gratification. What he now needs to do is to learn the immense importance of his desires, and to seek just and humane methods of gratifying them.

In proportion as he sees the strength and importance of his own desires he will see the strength and importance of his neighbor's desires; and as desire is pure love from the influx of the Law, he will hold his neighbor's desires as sacredly as he holds his own, and so justice will be born.

Now justice—that factor that harmonizes all influences, and in the end produces heaven on earth—can never be born of anything but man's recognition of the nature of desire. For when he recognizes desire he recognizes Love; and Love is the Law of Attraction. So when man recognizes desire within himself, and understands its origin and meaning, he will have found his own moving impulse, and he will see that it is as much of the Law as he can gain an intelligent conception of. And he will also see that every step of his growth, from his first inception, has been by the greater and still greater recognition of it; and that his further growth all through eternity will depend on the still increasing power of his intelligence to recognize yet more and more of the Law within him as expressed in desire.

If this statement has made its proper impression on the student he will now perceive how it is that man, as to his personality, is simply intelligence, or mind, and how the whole visible universe is mind in different degrees of unfoldment. And he will also see from this fact how it is that his destiny is entirely in his own hands, and always has been, hough he did not know it, and how he may now begin to do his own wing.

Since a man, as to his personality, and this is the visible part of himself, is altogether intelligence, it therefore follows that the more truth he learns the more he shows forth—the truth being that the Law within him as expressed in desire is the one diseaseless and deathless thing; and that it is the true self within him; his untrue, or false self, being the mistaken estimate he has placed upon his real and true self.

As a man's intelligence is expressed in thought which shapes itself into beliefs, his body, or his personality, is made up of his beliefs. A man shows forth his beliefs in his person. Knowing this great truth Jesus said: "As a man believes, so is he." When he believes error he shows forth error, or incarnates error in his personality. As error cannot endure, it therefore follows that unless the man corrects his erroneous beliefs his personality falls away from him.

It is a fact that diseases are multiplying all the time, and that lives seem to perish more easily—with less apparent cause—than ever before. This is because the new light is dawning more and more clearly, and the old consolidated beliefs of a hundred ages are losing their hold on the people, so that they weaken and disintegrate more easily than formerly.

Because of this fact, the most intelligent of the world's physicians have lost faith in medicines and stand aghast at their own helplessness. Many of them have retired from the practice of medicine from pure conscientiousness on this point. Mental Science will bring them forward as the world's benefactors again. I say again, because the noblest and most truly unselfish men and women I have known have been medical practitioners, persons who have honestly tried to relieve the world's suffering thousands. For remember this, that though the world's diseases are only false beliefs, yet they are real to it while they last because the man is all mind, and his beliefs are his conditions.

To repeat my ideas on desire—for I can never make this point too strong: The basis of all growth is desire. The Law of Attraction itself—that one and only law, on which all life depends—is desire, which is Love in expression, or Love seeking and attracting that which is related to it.

All growth of the individual, therefore, is effected through desire. Desire is the motor of every effort; and external life means effort, and has no other object but effort. The secret of the steel magnet is desire;

and no doubt the entire universe of planets is regulated and sustained in equipoise through this great factor alone.

The words "desire" and "love" are almost synonymous; both are love; but while love seems a quiescent principle, desire appears to be the reaching forth, or the yearning of love, or love in motion going forth in search of an object.

Man in his growth has nothing to do with the Love Principle, or the one vitality. That is to say, it exists independently of him, and he has no power to add to it or take from it. It simply *is*. His prerogative is confined exclusively to the recognition of it; to the getting a large enough perception of its greatness, or a big enough estimate of it. It is so mighty a power that the human intelligence as yet has gotten scarcely the faintest fraction of an idea concerning it. And yet this majestic power is the individual Life Principle existing in indescribable greatness in each man. It is the force within him that actuates every movement he makes. To connect the belief of sin, disease and death with this ever-flowing, eternal potency is an absurdity. And yet our intelligences—quite ignorant of this truth—have done this absurd thing, and in this

way have given to the external world our weak, wretched personalities that are standing libels on our real selves—the great and unconquerable individualities lying latent within us.

This capacity of Love, or Life, which manifests itself in numberless desires in the man is the real man. It is the true individual. It is the almighty and one Life focussed to expression; an upspringing jet from the unquenchable and divine passion men call "God." The desire in man is a power—all his own—drawn to coherence, or personal comprehension, out of the one indescribable force that sends the worlds spinning through space in obedience to its command. And it is great and unconquerable as its source.

This great creature then is the real man—is the true individual—and he is the Law individualized. Jesus saw this whole truth; and when they asked him "Art thou God?" hoping he would condemn himself by his answer, he could not deny it even though he knew they were ignorant of his meaning and would probably murder him for the truth he spoke.

For my part I am rapidly growing to that point in intelligence

where I can understand such a man, for instance, as Mohammed; a man who lived comparatively alone with his own understanding, and who studied himself interiorly until he gained a perception of his greatness; gained a constantly growing perception of it, until, looking at it in some supreme moment, he could not restrain his convictions of truth, but cried out in glad exultation: "Surely, surely I am God." Why, there are days when it is as easy for me to believe this of myself and of every living soul as it is to believe ourselves only men and women. Mohammed's mistake was in believing this stupendous fact of himself only, whereas he should have seen that all are gods in the same sense that he was.

The difference of seeing for ourselves alone, and of seeing for ourselves and all others equally, is the difference between injustice and justice, or between hell and heaven. To see within others the same glorious spirit that we see within ourselves is to abrogate those lines of inequality we have considered as race fixtures and to liberate every living soul to the freedom of an infinite possibility of growth. This wipes out hell in every one of its varied forms, and establishes the harmony of an acknowledged and deeply understood fraternal equality. Your desire for happi-

ness is as sacred as my desire, and my desire is as sacred as yours. When we shall learn the binding claim of desire through knowing that it is the voice of the Law within us, it will become the lovingest pleasure of our lives to help each other actualize it.

To make this lesson practical—to make it productive of present results—I will now give the student some affirmations and denials to be used in studying it;

Desire is not the "God-cursed" and sinful thing we have been in the habit of considering it. On the contrary it is the vitalizing Principle of Life, to be recognized by the intelligence and to be led forth into visible action under such direction from the intelligence as will render it most effective for good to ourselves and others.

Desire is the man in process of growth. Desire is never diseased nor sinful. It points only to happiness; and as a human intelligence I recognize this fact and stand by my desire from this time on.

My intelligence tells me that the desires that apparently point toward injustice to others do not really point there, because injustice to others does not bring happiness, but misery, and desire points to happiness alone.

Make these affirmations and denials slowly and thoughtfully. It is no good to repeat them parrot like. Bend your intellect to a full comprehension of their meaning as you repeat them, and they will take root in your brain and drive the old beliefs out.

Not on any hypothesis can we base the assumption that man is diseased or sinful, or in any way subject to death. Therefore let your denials be to this effect. Call up the whole argument, and then declare with great positiveness, "There is no sin, no disease, no anything that is not desirable."

You will say, "There is poverty, and what are we going to do about poverty?"

I answer, that in these lessons I am not trying to establish the student's relations with the outside world. I am simply trying to establish him in a knowledge of himself. If I succeed in doing this I shall have made a powerful magnet of him, and shall have placed him in the direct line of the Law of Attraction, where all things on the external plane that are related to his peculiar faculty will come to him through his personal efforts, or his reaching out for them. For though we are

now in the mental world, and have in a sense forgotten the cast-iron limitations that a belief in matter imposed on us, yet the time will never come when effort will be unnecessary to us. To be alive is to make effort; to be more alive is to make still more effort; and the time is near at hand when we shall be a hundred times more alive than we have ever been, and when all this wonderful vitality will be expended in effort that will change the whole face of the earth, giving us new climates, new productions, and producing wonders that we can have no present conception of.

To establish the student in a knowledge of himself is to put him in a position where his ever-growing demand for more knowledge of the possibilities of the Law is met by a never-failing supply. Knowledge is all that any man lacks. Knowledge of himself means nothing less than an ever-growing mastery of the conditions that surround him.

These lessons have nothing directly to do with a man's external conditions. I am well aware that the student feels the hampering influence of his environments almost as much, and sometimes more, than what he calls his physical disabilities. But these (so called) physical disabilities

are really mental disabilities. Each one of them is a record of some particular mode of thinking that is erroneous and hampering. All of them together make up the sum total of his ignorance, which is the only foe to his freedom; and this ignorance, or this negation of intelligence, constitutes the personality that he calls his physical body, the body of his present limitations. Now if I can get his "physical body," which is his intelligence, right, I shall have placed him where he will be in true relation to the Law of Attraction; and when he is in true relation with the Law he will find that those things in the external world to which he is related by desire will come to him because they belong to him. His effort to obtain them will meet with sure reward.

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